

PART VII

Farm Marketing and Level of Living

Location for Marketing

Kitsap County farms are favorably located for marketing in the local peninsular area with its population of 85,000 but are handicapped by ferrying costs and bridge tolls in moving farm products to processing and consumption centers in the Puget Sound basin and other national markets. In general, even though the area depends mainly on ferry and barge transportation, it is somewhat centrally located within the Puget Sound marketing area. This populated region with its 1,250,000 consumers is the third largest market area on the Pacific Coast. The future for selling more farm products is good both on the peninsula and the western Washington mainland adjacent to Puget Sound because the population is growing steadily. Furthermore, future engineering plans proposed will connect the Kitsap Peninsula to Seattle with cross-Sound bridging and to the Olympic Peninsula by bridging Hood Canal. While the peninsular location adds to transportation costs in exporting products, it also acts as a barrier against imports of farm products from other counties. Kitsap farmers enjoy a good advantage in their local market.

Transportation

The primary movement of farm products from Kitsap County croplands, livestock farms and farm woodlands is primarily dependent on trucks and Puget Sound ferries. Only a limited amount of products produced by farmers use rail or railroad barge service. The Washington State Ferries, a public, state-owned utility, provides the most important facility. There are four ferry terminals in Kitsap County which connect with the mainland in the densely populated Seattle-Everett area. Terminals are at Bremerton, Harper, Winslow and Kingston. Bremerton is the main terminal through which farm products enter and leave the county. An hourly schedule over a 20-hour daily period is available for farmers who sell in the Seattle market.

The Winslow terminal serves the berry, flower and specialty farming district on Bainbridge Island. Bainbridge growers are serviced with twenty ferry departures daily for Seattle. North Kitsap Peninsula farmers about Poulsbo and Kingston can use a service which has thirteen ferry trips daily to the Seattle-Everett area. The Harper ferry serves the south Kitsap area with 23 ferry trips daily. Kitsap County farmers can also market goods on the Olympic Peninsula in the Port Townsend and Port Angeles trade areas by using the ferry which departs from Lofall 28 times daily across Hood Canal for the Olympia Peninsula.

The main truck route developed since 1938 is the State of Washington toll bridge which crosses the narrows of Puget Sound at Tacoma. Through use of Highway 14 across this bridge Bremerton and most Kitsap communities and farm places are within 35 to 70 miles or 2 hours travel time from Tacoma.

Truck and truck-trailer tolls on the cross-Sound ferries and across the Tacoma Narrows bridge add a significant cost to the statewide agricultural marketing of Kitsap products. They also add to the cost and price of supplies

and equipment which Kitsap farmers buy from sources outside the county. Ferry tolls range from \$3.00 for pickup trucks to over \$15.00 for large trucks and trailers for a one-way trip between the Kitsap Peninsula and the mainland at Seattle. 1/ For instance, these charges would add over a dollar per ton for strawberries and Christmas trees going across the Sound to market, and likewise would add a dollar or more per ton to the price of hay and feed coming into the county. Toll charges on the Tacoma bridge for farm trucking are slightly less ranging from \$1.00 for the smallest truck to \$7.00 for the largest carriers. 2/

Income Value of Products Sold

Census of Agriculture data on the value of farm products sold, excluding forest products, show that gross income has been fluctuating in recent years. Kitsap County farmers received \$1,466,226 for crops and livestock in 1944. In 1949 returns were higher at \$2,133,518 and by 1954 had fallen to \$1,844,958. An estimate from the Kitsap County Extension Service states that during the five-year period of 1952-1957, the total value of all farm products sold averaged \$4,525,000. This figure includes the value of forest products which account for a major share of the total farm products sold.

Marketing Farm Forest Products

The county ranks second among the counties of the state in value of forest products sold and is one of the leading counties in the United States. Forest products made up 44.2 percent of the total value of farm products sold by Kitsap County farmers during the period 1952-57. Of this total, Christmas trees and evergreen brush (huckleberry and salal) accounted for the major portion of the income. Livestock and livestock products made up 42 percent of the total value of farm products sold, with poultry and poultry products and dairy products the largest sources of income.

Out of a total of 356 commercial farms there were 15 farms in 1954 with sales over \$25,000 and 30 farms which sold between \$10,000 and \$25,000 worth of farm products. Over one-third or 135 commercial farms had sales of products worth less than \$1,200 in 1954.

Marketing of Dairy Products

According to the 1954 Agriculture Census, Kitsap County farmers marketed livestock and dairy products worth a total of \$1,376,762. The sale of whole milk and cream by dairy farmers accounted for 30 percent of the total. In 1954, dairymen sold 7,874,406 pounds of whole milk and 54,941 pounds of cream to processors and distributors for a value of \$401,076.

1/ Washington State Ferries, Ferry Terminal, Pier 52, Seattle 4, Washington. "Chart of Truck or Trailer Tolls." (mimeographed) April 1, 1957.

2/ State of Washington, Department of Highways, "Tacoma Narrows Bridge Toll Schedule, March 1, 1953."

Table 23:- Livestock and Livestock Products Marketed
Kitsap County, 1954.

Class of Livestock Products Sold	Quantity Marketed	Amount Received By Farmers
<u>Dairy Products</u>		
Whole milk-----	7,847,406 lbs.	\$ 371,582
Butterfat-----	54,941 lbs.	29,494
Total all dairy products		\$ 401,076
<u>Poultry and poultry products</u>		
Chickens-----	235,351 birds	\$ 168,550
Eggs-----	1,326,404 dozen	576,405
Turkeys, ducks, geese----		53,758
Total all poultry & poultry products		\$ 798,713
<u>Animals sold alive</u>		
Cattle-----	727 head	\$ 90,012
Calves-----	990 head	33,567
Hogs and pigs-----	1,646 head	48,436
Sheep and lambs-----	150 head	2,060
Horses and mules-----	23 head	1,910
Total all animals sold alive		\$ 175,985
<u>Other livestock and livestock products sold-----</u>		\$ 988
Total amount received for livestock and livestock products-----		\$1,376,762

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture.

Six plants are engaged in buying milk and cream for processing into milk and other dairy products. Of these, Kitsap-Mason Dairymen's Association buys and processes over 95 percent of the milk produced by dairy herds in the county through home and store delivery. There are three plants which also buy cream for use in manufacturing butter and two plants which produce ice cream and cottage cheese. Three plants are located in Bremerton, two in Poulsbo and one in Port Orchard. Also located in the county are three producer-distributors.

Kitsap County is a deficit fluid milk area. The local dairy farms do not produce enough for the immediate market. Nearly 15 million pounds of milk a year are shipped into the county from neighboring Puget Sound processors to make up the deficit and supply the Kitsap County population with its fluid milk needs.

Marketing Poultry and Eggs

Kitsap County poultrymen sold \$798,713 worth of poultry products in 1954. This was over 57 percent of the total value of livestock and livestock products sold that year. The sale of eggs accounted for about 72 percent and chickens for over 20 percent. Farmers received \$576,405 for 1,326,404 dozen eggs and sold 235,351 chickens for \$168,550. Also marketed were turkeys, ducks and geese worth \$53,758. The Kitsap County Extension Service estimates that income from eggs and poultry products will reach a figure of nearly one million dollars by 1957.

The Washington Cooperative Farmers' Association maintains an egg receiving station in Poulsbo which collects eggs for shipment to their processing plant in Tacoma. Many poultrymen market their eggs either through direct retail outlets or wholesale to large supermarkets. They also sell to dairies that have retail routes or stores. There are eight commercial buyers who buy eggs from producers to sell in stores or on home delivery routes. A number of producer-distributors sell eggs door-to-door. Most of the eggs produced on Kitsap farms are consumed within the county.

Marketing Livestock and Livestock Products

Sales of livestock for market in 1954 brought farmers about \$176,000 according to the Census. There are two livestock slaughter plants located in Kitsap County. However, much of the livestock is transported to slaughter and packing plants in Pierce and King Counties. A livestock auction in the south Kitsap area provides a means of selling live animals.

Marketing of Crops

According to the 1954 Census of Agriculture, farmers sold crops valued at \$416,285. This is slightly more than one-fifth of the total value of all products sold off farms. In farm value of crops, Kitsap County stood 32 in the state.

Fruits, berries and nuts, particularly strawberries, raspberries and blueberries provided the largest source of income, bringing \$293,874 or 62.7 percent of the total value of crops marketed. Kitsap County ranked nineteenth among counties of the state in sales of these products.

Table 24.- Crops Marketed From Kitsap County Farms, 1954.

Type of Crop Sold	Amount Received By Farmers (Dollars)	Percent All Crops Sold
Fruits, Nuts and Berries (peaches, cherries, filberts, strawberries, raspberries)	\$ 293,874	20.7
Horticultural Specialties (cut flowers, plants, florist greens, holly, shrubs, etc.)	108,928	7.7
Field Crops (hay, silage, wheat, potatoes, etc.)	7,087	.5
Vegetables (sweet corn, snap beans, carrots, cucumbers, cabbage, etc.)	6,396	.4
Forest products (Christmas trees, evergreen brush, sawlogs)	1,000,000 1/	70.7
Total amount received by farmers for cash crops	\$1,416,285	100.0

1/ Estimate of Extension Service, Kitsap County. U.S. Census of Agric. did not collect data on Christmas trees and foliage sold from farms in 1954.

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture.

Horticultural specialties which include flowers, bulbs, plants, shrubbery and holly made up 23.3 percent of the total for the crops with a value of \$108,928 in 1954. There are six commercial nurseries located in Kitsap County.

Field crops and vegetables play a minor role in providing a source of income to farmers. A great portion of the acreage is in tame and wild grasses used for hay and silage. Nearly all of the hay and silage cut is consumed on the farm with little or none of it being sold. Vegetable crops such as sweet corn, snap beans, carrots and cabbage are grown for market but on a small basis. All of the vegetables grown commercially are sold on the fresh market within the county. The Farmers Market in Bremerton offers an outlet for many of the small producers of such products as eggs, poultry, vegetables, fruits, bulbs, flowers and berries of various varieties.

Marketing Farm Forest Products

Farm forest products are becoming more and more important to Kitsap County farmers as a source of income. The Census of Agriculture showed farmers had sold \$51,911 worth of cordwood, pulpwood and sawlogs in 1954. Farmers are turning their farm woodlots into profitable sources of income. There are no census data on Christmas trees and foliage. With a growing market for Christmas trees and evergreen brush, Kitsap County farmers realize an income of over two million dollars a year, according to Extension Service estimates. It is estimated by the Farm Forestry Agent that about 1,250,000 Christmas trees are cut each year. In total income derived from the sale of Christmas trees and evergreen brush, Kitsap now ranks second in the state and is one of the major suppliers in the United States. Kitsap County has seven certified tree farms, which are not generally classified as farms under the Census definition. These farms, however, are growing timber as a crop.

Table 25.- Forest Products on Farms, Kitsap County, 1954.

Type of Product	Farms Reporting	Quantity
Firewood and fuelwood cut-----	563	4,227 cords
Fence posts cut-----	193	18,691 posts
Sawlogs and veneer logs cut-----	83	5,286 M bd. ft.
Pulpwood cut (fir, alder, maple etc.)	4	122 cords
Cascara bark-----	no data	
Fir seed cones-----	no data	
Christmas trees-----	no data	
Value of firewood, fence posts, logs, lumber, pulpwood and other forest products sold-----	115	\$51,911

Sources: U.S. Census, Agriculture.

Wash. Crop and Livestock Reporting Service.

There are six commercial Christmas tree farms in the county who cut, package and ship trees to cities in California and eastern United States. Many of the farmers cut their own trees and sell them to the shippers on a footage basis. The price per tree ranges from 50¢ to \$1.00 depending upon the height of the tree. Kitsap County has nearly 40,000 acres in Christmas trees.

There are twelve huckleberry and salal evergreen foliage buying and packing companies in the county. These firms ship the foliage throughout the United States and some abroad for the florist trade. There is a uniform demand for huckleberry brush throughout the year with an average price of 25 cents per bunch.

A total of 150 separate logging operators are located throughout Kitsap County. Local farm woodland logs are mainly sold to the 26 saw mills in the county. Some larger high grade logs are trucked to mills in Shelton and Tacoma. There is a green veneer mill in Port Gamble and a piling and pole treating company at Winslow on Bainbridge Island. Nearly 75 percent of Kitsap County is in forest land and much of this is young timber of small sawmill log size or of good dimensions for poles and piling.

Agricultural Income Compared to Other Income Sources

Net income from agriculture accounts for less than one-half of 1 percent of the total income received by the residents of Kitsap County. Income from wages, salaries, rents and profits in other non-agricultural occupations and industries exceeded that from agriculture. Income received from payrolls of the U.S. Navy and other government work provided the greatest source of income for the residents of Kitsap County.

Table 26.- Types and Sources of Income 1950-1952
Kitsap County 1/

Type and Source of Income	Income in Dollars by Years			Percentage of County Income by Years		
	1950	1951	1952	1950	1951	1952
Agriculture	*	*	*	*	*	*
Construction	\$ 2,419,000	\$ 2,302,000	\$ 3,931,000	2.2	1.8	2.9
Government	51,376,000	66,713,000	73,207,000	47.7	53.5	53.4
Manufacturing	3,543,000	4,155,000	4,551,000	3.3	3.3	3.3
Service	6,028,000	6,305,000	7,045,000	5.6	5.1	5.1
Transportation, Communication and Utilities	3,782,000	4,032,000	4,502,000	3.5	3.2	3.3
Trade	12,433,000	14,863,000	15,966,000	11.6	11.9	11.6
Miscellaneous	1,358,000	1,513,000	1,922,000	1.3	1.2	1.4
Property Income	14,702,000	15,552,000	16,601,000	13.7	12.5	12.1
Other Income	11,935,000	9,370,000	9,441,000	11.1	7.5	6.9
Total	\$107,576,000	\$124,805,000	\$137,166,000	100.0	100.0	100.0

1/ John A. Guthrie and Stanley E. Boyle, County Income Payments in Washington, 1950-1952. Pullman, Wash. Washington State College, Bulletin No. 26.

* Less than one-half of 1 percent and included in Miscellaneous.

Specified Farm Expenditures

In the 1954 Census of Agriculture farmers reported expenditures related to their farming operations. Kitsap County farmers spent a total of \$1,872,260 for machine hire, labor, feed, gasoline and other specified items. Feed for

livestock and poultry accounted for nearly 70 percent of the total farm expense. Kitsap ranked 13 in the state in total expenditures for feed and 16 as to average expenditure per farm.

Table 27.- Specified Farm Expenditures in 1954, Kitsap County

Type of Expenditure	Number of Farms Reporting	Expenditure of All Farms	Average Per Farm
Machine hire.....	421	\$ 42,165	\$ 100
Hired labor.....	316	367,055	1,162
Feed for livestock and poultry	1,361	1,299,320	955
Gasoline, petroleum fuel & oil	796	103,325	130
Commercial fertilizer.....	356	57,255	161
Lime and liming materials.....	35	3,140	90
Total expended		\$1,872,260	

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture.

Specialization in dairying and poultry and the growing of berries requires sizeable expenditures for labor and feed. Hired labor costs averaged \$1,162 per farm on the 316 farms reporting this expense.

Farms hiring machinery had an average expenditure of \$100, which indicates that most Kitsap County farmers own machines needed to operate their farms.

Level of Living on Kitsap County Farms

On the whole, farm people have not enjoyed as high a level of living as city people. Farm incomes are lower, on the average, than urban incomes. Because of the isolated location of many farmers, such conveniences as electricity, hot and cold running water and telephones have not been as easily available to farm families. This is the general situation in American agriculture.

In Washington State and Kitsap County, however, the farm population compares quite favorably with other population groups with respect to the conveniences of modern living. Table 27 shows finding of a study of farm family level-of-living index for the State of Washington compared to national standards. This index is based on the prevalence of electricity, telephones, automobiles, etc., and the average value of products sold on each of the farms.

The standards of living on Kitsap County farms are above average. The farm family level-of-living index for the United States was 122 in 1950, compared to 100 in 1945. Washington was above the national average in 1950 with an index of 154, ranking eleventh among the states.

The farm family level-of-living index for Kitsap County in 1950 was 139, below the state figure, but considerably above the national average. The median income per farm family of \$2,445 was above the state figure and far above the national median income. Kitsap County farms exceeded the state and national averages in having such conveniences as electric washing machines, mechanical refrigerators, telephones, hot and cold water plumbing and central heating.

Table 28.- Indices of Level of Living of Kitsap County Farm Families, 1950 Compared with State and National Averages

Index Items	Percentage of total farm families with listed index items		
	United States	Washington	Kitsap County
Farm Family Level-of-Living	122	154	139
Median Income per Family	\$1,567	\$2,380	\$2,445
Electricity	78.3%	92.5%	95.1%
Electric Hot Water Heater	17.4%	49.1%	40.7%
Electric Washing Machine	58.7%	85.4%	87.6%
Home Freezers	12.1%	14.5%	7.8%
Mech. Refrigerators	62.7%	77.4%	78.2%
Telephone	38.2%	57.5%	63.9%
Hot and Cold Water Plumbing	23.8%	70.4%	75.6%
Central Heating	18.1%	17.8%	22.9%
Houses with More than One Person per Room	22.3%	15.7%	14.0%
Automobiles	63.0%	77.6%	71.7%
Travel 10 Miles or More to Trading Center	21.4%	20.5%	16.7%

Source: Walter L. Slocum and Carol L. Stone, The Farm People of Washington at Mid-Century.

Also, Kitsap County farms, in general, enjoyed better housing than is found in many American farming regions. As a whole, the farms were less isolated, being closer to trading centers than the average of all American counties.

As history and statistics presented in these pages have shown, agriculture in Kitsap County is a record of progress by its industrious people. In less than a century those who have chosen to live on the soil have made it an important farming county. Its dairy, poultry, vegetable, berry and fruit and horticultural specialty farms add much to the economic well-being of the area. Many part-time farms provide a secure and wholesome way of life for industrial workers. Each farm stands as a living monument to the spirit of enterprise and progress and religious faith of the many and varied agriculturists choosing their homes in the countryside of Kitsap County.